



Frequently Asked Questions: CCNA Curricula

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CCNA Curricula

Q. Why are there two CCNA® curricula?

- A. The Cisco Networking Academy® CCNA® Discovery and CCNA Exploration curricula are designed to meet the diverse needs of different types of students by using different methodologies to teach the same core concepts.

CCNA Discovery and CCNA Exploration target different student segments based on academic experience, skills, and goals, and accommodate a variety of educational approaches and learning styles to help all students succeed.

Both curricula emphasize critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, and the practical application of skills. The courses include embedded, highly interactive e-doing activities that stimulate learning and improve knowledge retention; hands-on labs; simulation-based learning activities; and online assessments.

CCNA Discovery and CCNA Exploration help prepare students for entry-level career opportunities, continuing education, and globally-recognized Cisco certifications. In addition, the courses help provide learning pathways from secondary to higher education institutions.

Q. Given their differences, how can CCNA Discovery and CCNA Exploration both align with the Cisco CCNA certification?

- A. The CCNA Discovery and CCNA Exploration curricula teach the same applied skills but present the information in different ways to appeal to both student segments. Each curriculum provides relevant and effective lessons to engage students and ensure they are successful in learning the material in a way that aligns with their educational backgrounds and goals

Both CCNA Discovery and CCNA Exploration cover the same core skills to help students prepare for the CCNA certification exam. The first two courses of CCNA Discovery also prepare students for the Cisco CCENT™ certification, an optional first step toward earning the CCNA certification.

Q. Are there any tools available to help instructors or students choose between CCNA Discovery and CCNA Exploration?

- A. Yes. An interactive CCNA Curriculum Guide highlighting the differences between the curricula is available on the [CCNA Curricula Overview](#) page on the Networking Academy website.

The guide provides a good overview of our CCNA curricula and will help you understand the similarities and differences between CCNA Discovery and CCNA Exploration. As you navigate the tool, you can make selections to generate a curriculum recommendation that best fits your needs.

The CCNA Curricula Guide includes examples of interactive activities, labs, videos, and games from the actual curricula to help you fully experience the courses instead of just reading about them.

Q. What is e-doing?

- A. E-doing is a design philosophy that applies the principle that people learn best by doing. The Networking Academy courses have always emphasized the hands-on, practical aspects of learning. E-doing brings that same practicality to the computer experience. E-doing promotes meaningful student engagement by encouraging interactive exploration and experimentation using electronic tools for network simulation that

provide rich feedback. E-doing also enables instructors to use multiple modalities to engage students in learning course objectives that are logically connected to each other and introduced in the context of students' lives and career opportunities.

Q. Why is e-doing such an important part of the CCNA curricula?

A. The presence of e-doing in the CCNA curricula effectively creates a toolkit that enables instructors to deliver an interactive, multi-modality learning experience with the following characteristics:

- Presents new concepts and skills in context, using real-world scenarios and examples
- Provides many opportunities for practice and feedback
- Emphasizes the use of computers to visualize complex ideas
- Promotes the exploration of networking concepts and experimentation with tools such as Cisco Packet Tracer and interactive Flash-based activities to help students develop a greater understanding of network technologies
- Provides network simulations to increase the amount of console-based practice a student can gain to supplement hands-on time with real equipment
- Uses global and multicultural scenarios to engage students
- Applies more specific scenarios and examples during in-class discussions and activities or homework assignments
- Applies learning strategies that support multiple learning styles such as visual, auditory, and hands-on

Articulation

Q. Is there a clear articulation path from the CCNA Discovery curriculum to the CCNA Exploration curriculum?

A. The CCNA Discovery and CCNA Exploration curricula have been developed with the goal of preparing students for the CCNA certification exam through the use of different pedagogical approaches. Articulation (course credit) agreements are generally developed at the institutional level based on existing programs and pathways. Students who complete the CCNA Discovery courses Networking for Home and Small Businesses and Working at a Small-to-Medium Business or ISP should develop the same competencies as those who complete the CCNA Exploration course Network Fundamentals. Moreover, an institution may choose to grant CCNA Exploration credit to students who complete the CCNA Discovery curriculum.

Q. Will both the CCNA Discovery and CCNA Exploration curricula help students prepare for enrollment in the Cisco CCNP® curriculum?

A. Yes, students who complete all four courses of either CCNA Discovery or CCNA Exploration will be prepared to enroll in the CCNP curriculum.

Equipment

Q. What are the equipment requirements for CCNA Discovery and CCNA Exploration?

A. For equipment requirements, please reference the equipment lists located on the [Tools](#) page for either CCNA Discovery or CCNA Exploration on Academy Connection. Since equipment availability, prices, and discounts vary by theater and region, you should contact your Networking Academy Technical Manager for specific information.

Q. Can Cisco Packet Tracer be used to replace the lab bundles for the CCNA curricula?

A. No, Cisco Packet Tracer is not a replacement for lab equipment. We recommend the use of physical equipment for hands-on learning. This is a key differentiator relative to other programs. Cisco Packet Tracer

simulations, which are embedded in the CCNA curricula, are supplemental and designed to provide learning opportunities within environments that cannot be replicated in the classroom.

Training

Q. What are the instructor training options and requirements for teaching CCNA Discovery and CCNA Exploration?

A. All new instructors are expected to complete instructor training in one of the following formats:

- In person training, approximately 40 classroom hours per course
- Fast Track option
 - CCNA or higher certification, formal evidence of industry experience, or formal evidence of CCNA teaching experience required
 - Fast Track completion requirements include:
 - Skills-based assessment
 - Case study
 - Completion must be done in a proctored environment
 - Instructors enroll in Fast Track through the Help Desk

Q. Will instructors who complete in-person training for CCNA Discovery also need to complete CCNA Exploration in-person training in order to teach both curricula?

A. After an instructor completes training for all four courses of either curriculum, he or she will be eligible to teach either CCNA Discovery or CCNA Exploration.

More details regarding instructor prerequisites to teach a class can be found in the Cisco Networking Academy Training Guidelines available in the [Tools](#) section of Academy Connection.

Translation and Accessibility

Q. Are the CCNA curricula available in translated and accessible versions?

A. We are committed to making our courses and documentation accessible and usable by all students to help them achieve their goals. Cisco's goal is to support the translation of CCNA Discovery and CCNA Exploration curricula, including course content, the user interface, and assessments, to the greatest extent possible to meet instructor and student needs.

Translation of the CCNA curricula improves student outcomes by facilitating learning success on a global scale. Our translation strategy is focused on the following United Nations (UN) languages: English, French, Russian, Simplified Chinese, and Spanish. These languages are spoken by more than 50 percent of the world's population.

CCNA Discovery is currently available in English, French, Russian, Simplified Chinese, and Spanish, and CCNA Exploration is currently available in English, French, Simplified Chinese, and Spanish. The courses are also available in a number of other languages through contributions by Networking Academy partners and community members.

In addition to translated language versions, accessible course versions provide access to CCNA Discovery and CCNA Exploration for students with accessible needs—including those with visual, auditory, and dexterity limitations.

Q. Will Cisco Packet Tracer be translated?

A. The instructions for Cisco Packet Tracer activities that are embedded in the CCNA curricula are translated in non-English courses. In addition, translations of the Packet Tracer user interface created by our instructor community are available for download from Academy Connection for the following languages: French, German, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.

Q. Where can I find current information about curricula translations?

A. The [Curricula Translation](#) section of Academy Connection contains up-to-date information on currently available and planned releases for all translated courses.

Cisco Press Books

Q. Which Cisco Press books support the CCNA Discovery curriculum?

A. The Cisco Press Learning Guides are presented in a format to complement and supplement the CCNA Discovery courses. The books focus on readability, study aids, pedagogy, and practice. They combine the textbook and the labs in one book per course.

Each book provides tutorial content that reinforces and supplements the corresponding online curriculum. Each book also contains the hands-on labs for the course plus additional labs from the Cisco Press authors to help strengthen the learners' understanding of course materials. These books come in a paperback format with a CD-ROM.

The CCNA Discovery Course Booklet is also available as a low-cost printed resource that can be used to study in places where Internet access may not be available.

To learn more about the books, visit [Cisco Press](#).

Q. Which Cisco Press books support the CCNA Exploration curriculum?

A. Three types of books support each course within the CCNA Exploration curriculum. The books provide flexible learning and study tools.

Companion Guides are portable desk references of Cisco Networking Academy course materials that students can use anytime, anywhere. Companion Guides are designed to reinforce online course material, helping students focus on important concepts and study for quizzes and exams.

Labs and Study Guides provide a complete collection of course lab exercises plus supplemental exercises for each course. The Study Guide section provides learning exercises. The course labs help students develop hands-on experience, while the supplemental labs provide additional hands-on practice as well as more advanced challenges.

The CCNA Exploration Course Booklet is also available as a low-cost printed resource that can be used to study in places where Internet access may not be available.

To learn more about the books, visit [Cisco Press](#).

Certification Exams

Q. What certifications align with the CCNA curricula?

A. Students learn the basics of routing, switching, and advanced technologies to help them prepare for the Cisco CCENT™ certification for entry network technicians and the industry-standard CCNA certification. CCENT and CCNA certifications are highly valued in the global networking industry and provide validation of the skills and knowledge required for entry-level networking careers.

For more information about certifications, vouchers and promotional codes available to students, and exam testing centers, visit the [Certification and Voucher](#) section on Academy Connection. Additional information is available on the CCNA certification Website at www.cisco.com/go/ccna, and the CCENT certification Website at www.cisco.com/go/ccent.

Q. What courses do students need to take to prepare for the CCNA and CCENT certifications?

- A. After completing the first two courses of CCNA Discovery, a student can choose to complete the CCENT certification exam, an optional first step toward earning the CCNA certification. CCENT certifies that students have developed the practical skills required for entry-level networking support positions. In addition, this certification is designed to assess a student's aptitude and competence for working with Cisco routers, switches and IOS.

Students who complete all four CCNA Discovery or all four CCNA Explorations courses will be prepared for the CCNA certification exam.

Q. Will students who complete the first two courses of the CCNA Exploration curriculum be prepared to pass the new entry-level certification exam?

- A. No. CCNA Exploration covers protocols and theory at deeper levels with switching covered in the LAN Switching and Wireless course. CCNA Discovery covers networking based on application and therefore introductory elements of routing and switching are introduced in the first two courses, Networking for Home and Small Businesses and Working at a Small-to-Medium Business or ISP.

Q. If students fulfill the exam requirements for the CCNA certification, will they also receive CCENT certification?

- A. No, students who certify at the CCNA level will not earn CCENT certification. The purpose of the CCENT certification is to provide an option for those who aren't ready for CCNA.

Q. How can I locate a Pearson VUE certification test center in my area?

- A. Pearson VUE has more than 4000 test centers in 162 countries worldwide. The quickest way to locate one near you is to visit the Pearson VUE Website at www.pearsonvue.com. Simply select the exam program you are interested in, and then follow the instructions.

Discovery Server

Q. What is Discovery Server?

- A. The CCNA Discovery courses are designed to provide a hands-on learning approach to networking. Some CCNA Discovery labs utilize network services, such as e-mail, instant messaging, Domain Name System (DNS), HTTP, or FTP. Since it is not always possible to allow students to access these services on a live network, the Discovery Server has been developed to provide these services through a server that supports an isolated lab environment, disconnected from the Internet. This enables instructors to deliver an enriching learning experience to students, while protecting the integrity of the production network.

Q. What services does the Discovery Server provide?

- A. The Discovery Server provides the following network services:
- DNS
 - Web Server
 - FTP
 - Telnet
 - SSH

- DHCP

Q. Is the Discovery Server software required for the CCNA Discovery curriculum and labs?

A. Yes. The Discovery Server is required to complete many of the CCNA Discovery labs.

Q. Does the Discovery Server require additional equipment?

A. No, the Discovery Server software does not require any additional equipment. The equipment list for the curriculum already supports the CCNA Discovery Server software.

Q. Where are the Discovery Server resources located?

A. The Discovery Server software and complete FAQ documentation can be downloaded from the [CCNA Servers](#) page in the Course Catalog section of Academy Connection.

Eagle Server

Q. What is Eagle Server?

A. The CCNA Exploration courses are designed to provide a hands-on learning approach to networking. The top-down approach adopted in the Network Fundamentals course enables students to set up and implement application layer services in a network lab environment.

Many of the hands-on labs in Network Fundamentals are based on an Internet model that uses a local server to provide a range of network services and applications that students can experiment with in the lab environment. The Eagle Server provides network services and applications that are typically accessed over the Internet in an isolated lab environment.

Q. What services does the Eagle Server provide?

A. The Eagle Server provides the following network services:

- DNS
- Web Server
- FTP
- TFTP
- SSH
- Instant messaging
- Wiki Server
- E-mail

Q. Where are the Eagle Server resources located?

A. The Eagle Server software and complete FAQ documentation can be downloaded from the [CCNA Servers](#) page in the Course Catalog section of Academy Connection.

Q. Is the Eagle Server software required for the CCNA Exploration curriculum and labs?

A. Yes, the Eagle Server is required to complete many of the CCNA Exploration labs.

Q. Does the Eagle Server require additional equipment?

A. No, the Eagle Server does not require any additional equipment. The equipment list for the curriculum supports the Eagle Server software.